

SUBJECT:	Allowing writing portfolio assessment in lieu of certain standardized tests
COMMITTEE:	Public Education — favorable, without amendment
VOTE:	9 ayes — Buckley, Allen, Allison, Cunningham, Cody Harris, Hefner, Longoria, Schaefer, Talarico 1 nays — Harrison 3 absent — Dutton, Hinojosa, K. King
WITNESSES:	<p>For — Rachel Seshan (<i>Registered, but did not testify</i>: Tricia Cave, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Julia Grizzard, Bexar County Education Coalition; Chloe Latham Sikes, Intercultural Development Research Association; Jean Mayer, Pflugerville ISD; Will Holleman, Raise Your Hand Texas; Emily Amps, Texas AFL-CIO; Kelsey Kling, Texas AFT; Barry Haenisch, Texas Association of Community Schools; Amy Beneski, Texas Association of School Administrators; Raif Calvert, Texas Association of School Boards; Holly Eaton, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Mark Terry, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association; Suzi Kennon, Texas PTA; Dee Carney, Texas School Alliance; Carrie Griffith, Texas State Teachers' Association; and 10 individuals)</p> <p>Against — (<i>Registered, but did not testify</i>: Michelle Wittenburg, Good Reason Houston; Mary Lynn Pruneda, Texas 2036; Carolyn Lux; Babs Miller)</p> <p>On — (<i>Registered, but did not testify</i>: Eric Marin, Iris Tian, Texas Education Agency)</p>
BACKGROUND:	Some have suggested that a writing portfolio assessment could be an alternative to some existing standardized testing formats for certain grade levels to improve student outcomes.
DIGEST:	HB 83 would allow a school district to use a writing portfolio assessment

to assess writing performance for students as an alternative to administering the portion of a reading assessment or an English I or II end-of-course assessment that was not presented in a multiple choice format. A school district that elected to use a writing portfolio assessment would be required to design the assessment in consultation with a higher education institution and submit the assessment to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for approval. TEA would be required to approve the assessment if the higher education institution determined the assessment to be, valid, reliable and designed to assess:

- a student's mastery of the essential knowledge and skills in writing through timed writing samples;
- improvement of a student's writing skills from the beginning of the school year to the end of the school year;
- a student's ability to follow the writing process from rough draft to final product; and
- a student's ability to produce more than one type of writing style.

A school district that elected to use a writing portfolio assessment could adopt a policy allowing the assessment to be scored by a classroom teacher assigned to the same campus as the student. The district could coordinate with the regional education service center for the district's region in grading the assessments.

The school district would not be required to administer the portion of a reading assessment or an English I or II end-of-course assessment during the period the district was administering the writing portfolio assessment. TEA would be required to apply cost savings that resulted from the exemption to offset the costs accrued to the greatest extent practicable.

The bill would apply beginning with the 2023-24 school year.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2023.

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NOTES: According to the Legislative Budget Board, HB 83 would have a negative impact of about \$1.5 million on general revenue related funds during fiscal 2024-25.